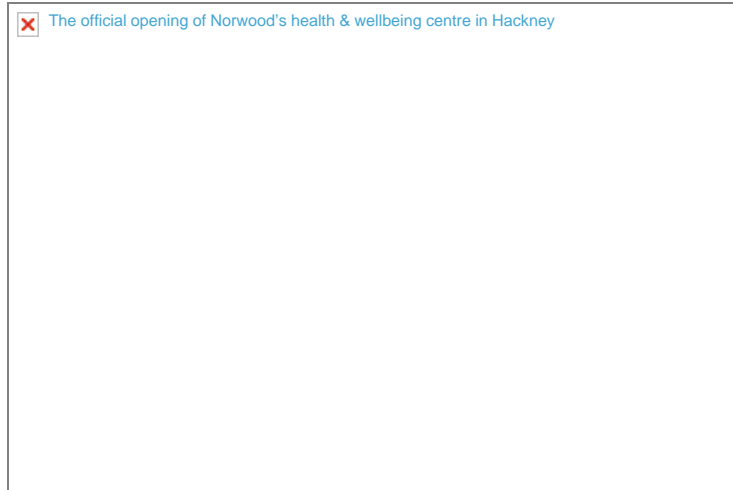


Wellbeing Official Opening

Hackney Orthodox community benefit from Norwood's new health & wellbeing centre

Norwood's Patron of Children's Services, **Cherie Blair** was the guest of honour at a ceremony today to mark the official opening of Norwood's new health and wellbeing centre in Hackney, providing services for the local orthodox Jewish community. **Wellbeing at Bearsted**, a partnership between **Norwood**, the **City and Hackney Primary Care Trust** and **Woodberry Down Children's Centre**, provides expert health care advice and services for children up to the age of five, including a newborn hearing screening clinic, an immunisation drop in and accident prevention classes. **Diane Abbott, MP for Hackney North and Stoke Newington**, also attended along with representatives from the orthodox community and Norwood's partners on the project.

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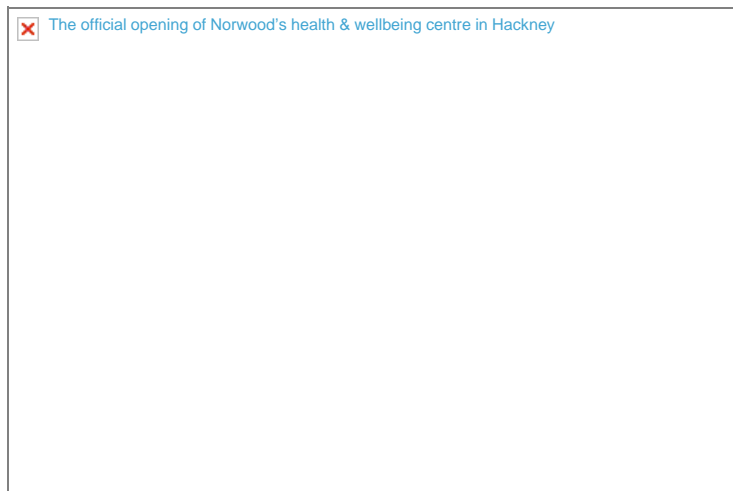
Cherie Blair, undertaking her first official engagement since becoming Norwood's Patron of Children's Services, spoke of her admiration for the charity and its role as an innovative service provider:

"The Jewish community has an enviable track record of supporting those in need. And for 200 years, Norwood has played a leading role in providing this help. Wellbeing at Bearsted, which will meet the needs of the orthodox community in Hackney, is another example both of Norwood's innovation and its commitment to working with local and national partners. The result is the community will benefit from a service that is local, professionally run and culturally sensitive."

Norma Brier, Norwood's chief executive, said: "Wellbeing at Bearsted is the result of a groundbreaking collaboration and the services offered here will be responsive and adapted to the needs of the orthodox community, supporting the wellbeing of local families, in particular mothers and their children. Norwood is committed to offering services for the whole of the community here in Hackney and elsewhere."

Chanoch Kesselman, Executive Co-ordinator of the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations, said:

"Norwood's wonderful new facility in the heart of the Charedi community in Stamford Hill will ensure that children's health can be assessed and monitored by highly-qualified staff. Parents may be reassured that any concerns about their children's wellbeing will be professionally addressed and help is close at hand. The Wellbeing at Bearsted facility is welcomed by the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations and we encourage mothers to make use of this very valuable resource".



Marcia Smikle, service development manager with City and Hackney Teaching PCT, said: "One of our key priorities is to respond to patient needs and preferences by continuously improving access to services. We are doing this by making services available at a wide range of community settings. Wellbeing at Bearsted in Hackney is one example of healthcare services being offered closer to where people live."

Mrs Etti Kvitt, who uses the services on offer said: "Wellbeing at Bearsted has given me and my family quality services in a relaxed and informal setting. Having this so close to home and right next door to the family centre encourages me to use all the wonderful services on offer here. I look forward to continuing to use both Wellbeing and the Family Centre as I raise my young family".

Cherie Blair cut the ribbon to declare the centre officially open and, once the speeches had been made, guests had the opportunity to look around and speak with staff about the services on offer. They were then taken to the adjacent Somers Children & Family Centre, run by Norwood, where they met mothers and their children who use Norwood's services. In a touching moment, a two-year-old girl presented Cherie Blair with a bouquet of flowers.

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